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A Publication of Seeker Communications ☽☾ Volume 16, Number 5 ☽☾ May 2004

THE SEEKER JOURNAL

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The Seeker Journal * P.O. Box 3326 * Ann Arbor, MI 48106 * (734) 665~3522
seeker@seekerjournal.org * http://seekerjournal.org/

$2.00

About The Seeker Journal

The Seeker Journal is a monthly non-for-profit journal of education and inspiration, published in support of the magical, earth-centered religious community.

John M. Morris Ph.D: Executive Editor
Misti Anslin Delaney: Managing Editor
David Burwasar: News Editor
Cather "Catalyst" Steincamp: Online Editor and HTML Guru
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The Seeker Journal is a member of the WPPA #94099

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About the Cover:

About the Artist:

Nancy Liedel has been pagan for more years than she cares to admit. She lives in Ann Arbor, MI with her husband of ten years, their three children, 3 dogs and 3 cats. The High Priestess of Sacred Hearth Coven, Nancy enjoys nature and time spent in creative ventures. Nancy's website can be found at: http://www.sacred-hearth.org

About the Art: Gaia

This piece was originally created for Denessa Smith, the head of the Tempest Smith Foundation which seeks to educate public school systems in understanding of bullying and alternative religions. I created it in Photoshop. This piece reminds us we are all created of the stars and must care for one another and the earth around us.

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Editorial

by John M. Morris PhD

Rain Rain Go Away

April showers this morning reminded me that we sometimes use magic to make the showers go away. Perhaps we've planned a beautiful gathering out in the woods, and we know what will happen if the skies open and the rain come down. To keep things bright and dry, we sometimes do an anti-rain ritual.

We conducted one ritual several years ago in Grand Rapids, to protect a beautiful handfasting that a priestess and I conducted in a public park, where a hundred guests had come to bring their blessings to a particularly lovely ceremony for a beautiful young priestess and her fiancé. For three hours, the skies were dark with clouds, and thunder rumbled in the distance, but there was no sign of rain. The guests rejoiced and dined on wedding goodies served on picnic tables, and, when it was all over, I prepared to come back to Ann Arbor. At that fateful moment, the rains came. Torrents streamed down from the angry clouds, which thundered around me all the way home. Like every magical working, this carried the motto: *Be careful what you ask for, because you may actually get it.* Or rather, you may actually get some other things you haven't counted on.

The High Priestess and teacher, with whom I studied for three years, in the Detroit area, neglected this warning as we were learning magical ways of making it rain. We sat in her living room, where she led us in some of the appropriate rain chants, then went out into the back yard, where we could actually try out our rainmaking abilities. We danced and sang, and before long the clouds were sending down some tentative sprinkles for us. We were happy at the success of our ritual, but by then, it was time for us to go home, and I began the forty-mile trip back to my house. Then the rains came. Lightning was flashing, streets were flooding, and I wasn't sure I was going to get back home. It was particularly chancy on the freeway, where a series of underpasses dip down below the crossing roads. One was badly flooded, and my little car had to go bravely through a couple of feet of water. I did get home, though, and learned still another lesson about weather working: You can make it rain, if that's what you want, but you should always remember to shut it off, when you've had enough.

In his biography of the great Sioux leader, Black Elk, John G. Neihardt tells of the time, late in his life, when Black Elk was asked to bring an end to the draught that was threatening to wreck the tribe's harvest, which was slowly turning to dust under a cloudless sky. Using the magic he had learned during many years of training and practice, Black Elk blew the smoke from his sacred pipe, shook the large rattle, which sounded like thunder, and called on the sacred spirits to bring rain to his people. The skies darkened, the thunder rolled, and the rains came, just in time to save the harvest. The old man wept with joy, that the spirits would still answer his prayers.

For many, many years, I'd learned to ignore magical happening like these. I was an officer in the "humanist" movement, along with such noted philosophers as John Dewey, Bertrand Russell, and Corliss Lamont, and we saw it as our task to stamp out silly superstitions, including, of course, the belief that you can influence the weather through magic.

We humanists liked to think that we were pure and clean and honest, not caught up in popular cults, with their belief in non-existent supernatural spirits. We carried with us the spirit of science, which demanded an end to religions and their weird beliefs. My finest moment came when I wrote "Wishing Will Make It So," a flaming attack on Norman Vincent Peale, who claimed that religious beliefs could bring success in healing and in meeting career goals: "*Optimistic visualization, combined with prayer and faith, will inevitably actualize achievement,*" as he puts it in *The Power of Positive Thinking.* Religious prac-

tices were the key to worldly success. I found this ridiculous, and even dangerous for those that took these words too seriously.

Somehow, though, I slowly began to see that there is another side to the story. People were sick and dying. People were out of their jobs. Their romances or their marriages were falling to pieces. It wasn't much help to them to tell them to think positively about themselves and the world. Every day in their lives meant a new tragedy, and nothing in normal, secular science could speak to their condition. There was no spark of hope anywhere in their lives.

This is the point at which the Gods and Goddesses can enter. One of their tasks is to bring hope to the hopeless. Some of their work is purely magical, like causing a wound to heal more quickly. Most often, though, their help is in healing the soul, turning us away from the hopeless attitude that seems to follow failures. Several years ago, Norman Cousins, editor of the weekly *Saturday Review,* was diagnosed with cancer, and his doctor told him that he had only a few months to live. Cousins might have despaired, but he didn't. He listened to great music, he laughed with his friends, and he told jokes. His positive attitude helped his body to fight against the cancer, and he lived for many more years. Like our rituals to control the weather, Cousins' positive actions and attitude helped to control the growth of the cancer.

We rarely recognize the importance of attitude in shaping our world. Whether we are attempting to keep the rain off our wedding feast, or fighting against a terrifying disease, our attitudes can help to make our world better.

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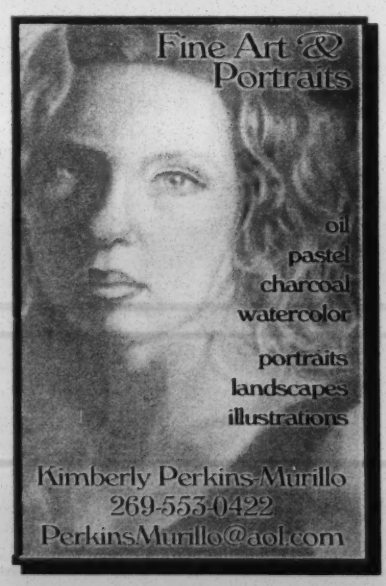

Catalyst Point

by Cather Steincamp

Appropriate Response

We've all got our pet peeves about the Pagan Community. Sometimes it's people that get on our nerves, and sometimes it's the mindsets that people have. Sometimes it's groups of people with a certain mindset. And of course, sometimes what really ticks us off is someone else's idea of exactly what Paganism should represent.

When this argument comes up, there's always the argument about what's "fair" and what's "appropriate." Of course, the terms "fair" and "appropriate" are very subjective terms, and they almost always seem to be used in such a way as to support the person who's using them.

For example-- I've been hearing a lot of discussion lately on the subject of "Bunnies." There isn't a single definition for "Bunnies," or even a single term; you'll hear them called "Fluff Bunnies," "Fluffy Bunnies," "Pink Fluffy Bunnies," or a variety of other not particularly flattering names. While nobody identifies themselves as a Bunny, it's not uncommon for particular behavior to cause someone to get lumped into this category. This behavior can include (but is not limited to) confusing fantasy with reality, claiming expertise where none exists, claiming persecution where none exists, claiming to be the reincarnation of someone important, famous, or fictional, or claiming phenomenal magic powers. Now, to be "fair", most of the Bunnies are not bad people. Some of them are just following a trend, some of them have been misled by others, and some of them have some serious issues. The argument is made that it's not "appropriate" to criticize these people.

The problem is that the terms "fair" and "appropriate" are being applied in a rather selective manner.

Let's look at this situation from another view-

point-- here we have a group of people who are living and perpetuating stereotypes that the rest of us are fighting. (They're often fighting them, too-- which they make it even harder for the protests to be taken seriously.) Every time we tell someone we're a Pagan, we pray that they either haven't met one of these Bunnies or aren't going to judge us based on them. They tend to be very enthusiastic-- which translates into loud, and often pushy-- and often make the strongest impression on newcomers who come looking to Paganism for a serious religion.

One complaint about Christians that's common among Pagans is that they don't try to counteract the things said by Falwell and Robertson. "They can't be that decent," it's said, "if they let people like that say and do such things in their name. They support them with their silence." I've heard the same argument used to justify attacks against many religions and ethnic groups. Of course, this statement is never made to the members of these ethnic groups-- so how many times has it been said about us, behind our backs?

And yet, we seem to think we're obligated to suffer this indignity in silence. We're not only supposed to respect the people that do this to us, but we're expected to include them. We must be respectful of all things Pagan, after all. It's not right to force our opinions on others.

Now, I've got a pretty good perspective when it comes to Bunnies. See, I used to be one-- one of the worst. I don't talk about it much, mostly out of shame, but when I discovered Paganism I was damaged goods. I took my myriad issues and embraced a religion that I chose to perceive in a fashion that was custom fit to soothe all of my neuroses.

In the end, it didn't help. I became one of those whackos who believes that they are chosen by the Gods, and because of that, they are always Right. I replaced my fear of being rejected with an utter disregard for the feelings of everyone around me, and it amazes me that I kept any friends at all. I lived in a universe of my own design that revolved around me. Through it all, I craved attention and affirmation-- which were provided by my newfound Pagan Friends. They really and truly thought they were being nice to me.

It's not their fault that I was a flake, and it must have taken a heroic effort to tolerate me. But in hindsight, they really weren't doing me any favors. The system just doesn't work that way. Humans learn by feedback; I was being given positive feedback for behavior that over a decade later fills me with shame. I got better, of course, but only because I spiraled down to rock bottom and stayed there for a while.

It's worth noting that Paganism-- real Paganism, and not the low- calorie version I'd adopted-- helped get me back on my feet. I was drawn to Paganism because it was right for me; I just took a few wrong turns getting here. So when I hear people suggest that we should be nice to the Bunnies, all I can think of is the line from Sondheim's Into the Woods: "You're so nice... you're not good, you're not bad, you're just nice..."

I'm not advocating making rabbit stew or anything drastic, I'm just suggesting a different approach. Instead of feeding their need for attention, maybe we should actually do something constructive. If someone is annoying, pushy, or offensive, we shouldn't overlook their behavior because they're Pagan. If you can't find it in your heart to tell them that they're irritating you without being unnecessarily rude, then just ignore them. Walk away. If they get too pushy, tell them to grow up. They may not like it, but they'll learn that, hey, maybe people don't want to hear the story of how they found out they were the reincarnation of (insert someone ridiculous here). Sometimes it's okay to tell someone "Hey, you're making me uncomfortable."

How is it right to reward someone for bad behavior? How is it inappropriate to complain about it? How are we helping them by coddling them?

One of the ugly truths is that we, to a certain extent, enjoy the Bunnies. They're entertaining, particularly when they're dead serious, and there are a lot of people who like the respect that Bunnies tend to bestow on Elders-- and it doesn't take a lot of work to convince a Bunny that you're an Elder. There are a lot of Pagans who will take advantage of their naïveté, and while it's normally harmless, sometimes the Bunnies get exploited.

Whether you like the Bunnies or not, they're part of the Pagan Community-- and as such, we bear a certain amount of responsibility for both their

behavior and their treatment. We're not going to do them any good by humoring them, and we're not going to help the community by just letting these folks run wild. If they're not interested in acting like sane, rational adults-- and many of them just aren't-- we shouldn't be trying to make them feel welcome at the expense of others who aren't comfortable with them. But many of them, with a little understanding and honesty, can be led to find a peer group of grown Pagans who are grounded in reality.

It's easy to tolerate this behavior most of the time; you don't have to hurt anyone's feelings. But is it right? Is it right to spare yourself this uncomfortable moment and help this person continue to embarrass themselves, as well as everyone else present? I believe that we have to take responsibility for this element of our community. Some of these folks need the help that a community can offer. True, some of them don't want help and some of them can't be helped. But we can't just ignore them and let others believe that we are all like this. This hurts our image, and worse yet, it will make it harder for the serious seekers to find us and take us seriously. In the end you can spare one person's feelings, but you might end up making victims the rest of us. In what way is that appropriate? Or Fair?

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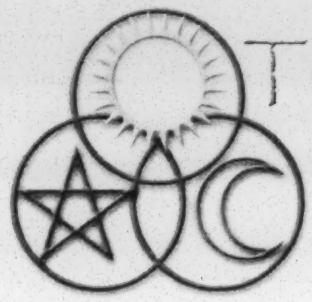
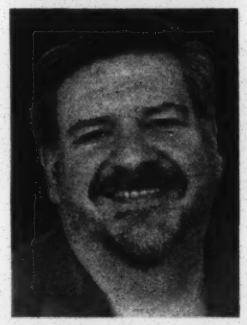


Bealtaine, 2004

The Wedding of the God and Goddess

You know what one of the best things about



writing this series of articles has been? I can go back and reread previous articles I have written, and see just how good or bad they really were.

And I just can't resist the impulse to reprint the opening paragraphs from last year's Bealtaine article:

> Ah yes! Bealtaine. The Wedding of the Lord and Lady... Have you received your invitation yet? I just got mine. I was so excited! It reads in part:
>
> The pleasure of your company is eagerly requested as the Universe celebrates the union of the God and Goddess.
>
> Date: The First of May
>
> Time: From Dawn till Dusk
>
> Dress is casual but celebratory, even optional in some climes. Floral themes and bells are especially appropriate. Gifts of food and fruit are encouraged.
>
> Come prepared to dance!
>
> And do you know what was even more exciting than the message? It was the messenger: A small songbird, hidden in the hedge in my back yard, singing his heart out. Singing for his mate. Singing for the future

I know it's a little fanciful, but it really does express the celebratory feeling of Bealtaine. The feeling that Nature is finally awake and ready for some fun.

Bealtaine lands on the Wheel of the Year directly opposite that of Samhain. It is a fertility Sabbat and celebrates life above all else. To the Celts it was one of the most important celebrations of the year, second only to Samhain, and it marked the end of the winter season and the beginning of summer.

In America these days, most pagans celebrate Bealtaine by erecting a May Pole and dancing around it. Most folks recognize the pole as the phallic symbol it is, but fewer recognize the symbolism of the entire dance. The dance starts

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with the set up of the pole itself. Traditionally the pole is last December's Yule tree stripped of its lower branches and erected in a field or pasture.

Today we often attach as many ribbons to the pole as necessary to allow everyone to join the dance, but traditionally only eight ribbons were used – one for each of the Sabbats. This meant that only four couples could join – one couple for each of the solstices and equinoxes. A four-quartered Wheel of the Year. Each man held a red ribbon in his left hand – red for the color of the God. Each woman held a white ribbon in her right hand – white for the Virgin Goddess. And as they danced around the pole, encasing it in a covering of white and red, they were symbolically wrapping the Virgin Goddess in the embrace of the God, and around the God's member, thus insuring fertility and renewed life by an act of sympathetic magick.

Sometimes a May Queen and King are chosen to represent the Lord and Lady. Often the May Queen is chosen from a group of young girls who have come of age in the last year. The May Queen is chosen by lot, and then the Queen chooses her King either directly or by lot. Often this is done as part of the preparation for the May Pole dance. The King and Queen are then placed facing each other on opposite sides of the May Pole, and are literally wrapped up with the ribbons by the dancers. The result is a young couple (representing the Lord and Lady) in a tight embrace, with a pole (representing the God's member) firmly between them. How much more erotic can you get?

Besides being a Fertility Festival, Bealtaine is also a Fire Festival. In many traditions a small sacred bonfire is built and the smoke from the fire, which has been sweetened with fresh herbs and incense, is used for the purification before the ritual. In the past most cultures in the northern hemisphere have traditionally celebrated some type of spring fertility festival with some form of fire lighting ritual.

- In Ireland it was forbidden by law for anyone to light a new fire on Bealtaine until the High King in Tara lit the "first fire".
- In Scotland the bale-fire was lit from another fire called the "need fire". This "need fire" was ignited by using the friction of a wheel which symbolized the ever spinning Wheel of the Year.
- In Sweden the bale-fire had to be lit by a man and a woman striking two flints together. This was symbolic of the sexual union of the God and Goddess.
- In Norway the bale-fire was called Balder's Fire. Old brooms were often tossed on the fire to symbolize the burning of the old year and its accumulated bad luck, while new brooms were brought out and dedicated to sweeping in the new.
- In Slavic countries young men traveled house to house collecting fuel for the bale-fire. Those who wished for healing in the coming year would contribute dried wreaths for good health.
- In China a group of men would go throughout the villages reminding people to extinguish all their old fires by the end of April so that new fires could be lit on May 1st. As a result, the meal eaten on the night of April 30th was traditionally a cold one since the cooking fires had been put out.

Bealtaine is one of those Sabbats that was so firmly entrenched in people's hearts that the Church had to co-opt it in it's entirety just to get folks to come into the church and out of the fields. The spring fertility rites had to be disguised as the May Pole Dance and the Morris Dance. New born lambs, intricately decorated eggs, and newly hatched chicks, all symbols of spring fertility and rebirth, were co-opted as symbols of their new Savior. And last but not least, the ritual of lighting the bale-fire as the Sun rose eventually became the Easter Sunrise Service.

Of course some traditions simply wouldn't translate even as they refused to die out. The modern tradition of having your wedding in June was due to the fact that May was reserved

for the wedding of the God and Goddess. It was unlucky to tempt the Gods by having your wedding during the same month as they did. They might misunderstand and think you were trying to upstage them. So just to be on the safe side no one held their weddings in May. May is for the weddings of Gods; June is for the weddings of Mortals.

So how does all this tie into this year's theme of "transitions" you ask? You have got to be kidding! What greater transition (birth and death excepted) is there in life?

For the God it is His transition from being a callow youth into the full power of His role as Lord of Life. He becomes not only the Consort and Protector of the Lady, but also His own Father, thereby insuring another cycle of life and rebirth.

For the Goddess it is Her transition from the innocent Maid into the full power of Her aspect as Mother of Life. She becomes not only Wife to the Lord, but Mother to His future reincarnation. In the process She becomes fully aware of, and the keeper of, the inextricable mysteries of life, sex, and birth.

For Mortals a wedding is the transition from being single to being married; from being a "lone wolf" to a respectable husband; from being a "wild kid" to being a wife and mother. As a culture we spend huge amounts of money to stage "the perfect wedding". We hire wedding coordinators, and floral consultants. We rent tuxedos, and buy fancy dresses, and stage enormous feasts. We have highly elaborate rules of etiquette that detail just where each of the wedding guests is to sit, when they should speak, and how long the speeches should be. We even have a nickname for the bride who gets too carried away planning her own wedding. We call her "the Bridenator"!

Well, instead of encouraging you to put the same amount of effort into planning and celebrating the wedding of the Lord and Lady as we do into planning our mortal weddings, I am going to encourage you not to.

The wedding of the Lord and Lady isn't about dresses, or tuxedos, or feasts. It isn't about where the in-laws are going to sit, or what wine goes with the entrée. It isn't about how impressive the church looks, or what religion the minister practices. It isn't about pleasing your Grandmother, or making sure your Mom has just the right color dress.

It's about life, it's about love, and it's about sex. It's about the promise of last year's seeds being fulfilled as they sprout into new spring crops. It's about the birth of lambs and calves. It's about "April showers bring May flowers". It's important to recognize this, and to celebrate it, and to honor it.

- Put out small loosely tied bundles of brightly colored yarn for the birds to build their nests out of, and then go for a walk and try to spot the new bird nests up in the trees.
- Sit out in your back lawn and try to find a four leaf clover among the freshly sprouted grass stems.
- Feed peanuts to the squirrels in the local park and try to spot their nests as they run back to feed their young.
- Plant an herb garden. Or a vegetable garden. Or maybe just a pot full of marigolds. The joy of watching something you planted and nurtured grow to maturity is the true essence of Bealtaine.
- If you're single, "screw your courage to the sticking point" and ask that special someone out on a date. If you're married, surprise your partner with something romantic.
- Hide Easter eggs in your back yard and build your own May Pole. Then invite the neighbors over for an Easter Egg Hunt, and teach the kids how to dance around the May Pole. (Just don't mention the sex symbolism part, they'll have plenty of time to figure that out when they're older.)
- Go camping and teach your son or daughter to fish, or hunt for herbs, or gather mushrooms. While you're waiting for the fish to bite, or rummaging under the bushes looking for those

'shrooms, really listen to what they talk about. "Out of the mouths of babes and innocents, wisdom often comes." You may find that they are more in touch naturally with the spirit of the season than you are.

However you celebrate Bealtaine, by elaborate ritual or simple contemplation, remember that we are all just riders on the Wheel of Life.

Blessed Be!

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May Day's Magickal Children

The wheel turns again and once more we smell spring on the breeze and hear the sounds of rebirth. The God and Goddess are in a romantic embrace and all nature is flirting and courting. The warmth is tapping the ground calling to the sleeping life beneath, " Come out, Come out, wherever you are!!!"

Beltane, one of the greater Sabbats, is a celebration of fire and fertility. It falls in the opposite place on the wheel from Samhain making it just as meaningful to us. Where Samhain honors the past and is a reflective holiday, Beltane is joyous and lustful. This is the Sabbat that looks to the future and to all the possibilities that await you. It invites you to embrace life in all its glory and beauty.

Traditionally, this was the time of year when farmers asked for fertility for their livestock and fields. They would light two large fires and herd their livestock between them. Many modern day pagans believe that the name, Beltane, comes from a form of the word, "balefire". Even today, we have bonfires on Beltane. We may not herd cattle between them but we do "jump the fires" to bring us our pleasures in the coming months. The smoke from the Beltane fire is also said to purify whatever passes through it.

This is a wonderful time of year to connect with the child within you. Everything is being reborn and the wonder of watching the determination of every little plant and every bud claiming their place in the sun is awe-inspiring. Take time to look, listen, smell, and see the drama unfolding around you. Appreciate the changing world with childlike eyes. Forget, just for a moment, your adult worries and obligation and embrace the innocent appreciation of the world around you.

This is a special time for pagans and their children. The children in your life are seeing others take our symbols and use them for their own celebrations, even if it doesn't make any sense. But, we don't have to be distressed by this. I have come to see all the bunnies, eggs, baskets, and flowers as honoring our beliefs by imitation, even if they don't know it. Personally, I take every chance I get to explain it to them and clarify the situation.

Use this time to teach your children our ways and help them understand what is happening around them. Be joyous in celebrating not only your rituals, but their participation in their own ritual activities. Share our stories of Beltane and the meaning of images they see each day in storefronts and in the neighborhood. Explain the "why" we do what we do as well as how nature is changing. Our connection with nature is at the heart of our spirituality and this time of year allows us to not only teach our children but also to show them these connection.

Children learn by doing and they love to be creative. This is the time for the maypole. The pole that was used was the trunk of the Yule tree after the branches were removed. Traditionally, it had red and white ribbons that men and woman would hold and weave in and out around the pole. . Men would hold one color and women another. Why not help your children make a maypole centerpiece for the table. Glue strips of paper-bags to a paper towel roll and color it to look like bark. Select ribbons of yellow, pink, green, white, and other colors of the flowers around your yard or in the park. Kissing balls are usually hung for Yule but I like making them for Beltane. Use Styrofoam balls and put silk or fresh flowers such as crocuses,

lilies, and tulips all over it. Hang it in a doorway or over a table. Bless each other daily with a kiss under the kissing ball.

It is so enjoyable to dance the May Dance around the maypole. I think last year was the first year we did it right. Over, under, over, under, again and again, round and round we go. The weaving the ribbons symbolize the joining of male and female. Explain this interconnectedness by showing your children how everything in nature is woven together to create a tapestry of life. Teach them how to weave. Let them pick colors they see around them or create a weave using fabrics with nature prints.

This is a time of celebration. Plan a May Day party and let your children help you to make a large maypole and tissue paper flowers to decorate the tables and yard. They can use recycled paper, or make their own paper, to create their invitations. Ask each guest to bring a seed to plant in a children's garden.

Remember back to your own childhood and the May baskets you made. We made cone baskets and filled them with flowers. We would hang them on neighbors' doors, ring the bells, and run away like fairies playing with humans. Why not make May baskets and bring them to a local nursing home to bring them a little spring indoors and emphasize the joy of giving and community service. And don't forget to leave something sweet outside for the fairies.

This is the time to get your garden ready for planting. Where I live, we say you should wait to plant until after Mother's Day. But now is the time to prepare the soil for planting and to get ready those special things that you want to include in the garden. Let your children have their own space for a garden and, if you didn't do it during the winter, help them decide on a theme. Would they like a butterfly and hummingbird garden or a "Me" garden filled with their favorite colors? Would they like a "Pizza" garden with tomatoes, basil, peppers, etc. or a "Touch" garden filled with plants of different textures? Let them plan it and work it. Beltane is a time of fertility and a child's garden that they can work and see the birth of their plants and the results of their labor is a gift to, and from, the Divine.

If they are starting the garden from seeds, try to plant a few plants already started. Children like to see results quickly and if they can see a few plants growing quickly it helps them be patient for the seeds to sprout. Still too early in your part of the country? Children love to cook and a fun way to celebrate Beltane is to bake cookies in the shapes of flowers found in your area. Eat the cookies at your ritual or at your May Day party.

Now that we can go outside more, why not celebrate by making pinwheels and taking a walk to find the breeziest spot. You might appreciate knowing where it is when those hot August days arrive. If you don't have a breezy spot begin creating one, plant a tree. Teach your children to honor nature by replacing what humankind has taken from Her. Your children can see how just one tree can make a difference not only in their lives but also in the lives of the birds and animals around them.

Beltane is a time of love and passion. Find your own passion. Look for the one thing that fires your creativity, curiosity, or desire. Be a role model for your children by sharing what you are passionate about and encouraging them to explore their own interests. Let the fire within them burn brightly. You may be surprised at how much light it gives off.

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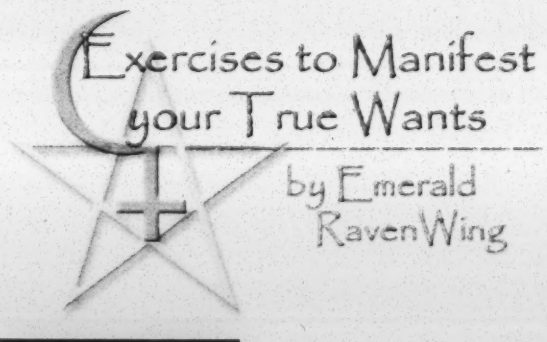

Often people have difficulty manifesting their true desires because they don't have a clear idea as to what they really are.

We all have a general sense of what we want in our future, but we often get caught up in the daily grind of our routines and forget to make any conscious actions toward manifesting that future.

To help focus our minds on manifesting our true desires, we first need to define what those desires are! So, what is it that you want in this moment? Concentrating on what you want right

now will help you to create the life you want to be living in the future!

Start by creating a simple list of your wants in this moment; be as direct as possible using only one or two sentences.

You want the list for easy reference so it's best to keep it on a steno pad, in day planner, or as a computer printout you can review every day. The ideas on this list can be as mundane or complex as you want, short or long term.

Expect your list to grow and change. This is a flexible list that can change as your wants and needs change. The purpose of this list is to let you get in touch with what you *really* want for yourself, whether what you want is a new pair of shoes or a mansion in Malibu.

Now that you have your list, you need to look at it every day to remind yourself to stay on track in manifesting what you really want. Revise, add to, or cross off your accomplished goals, as needed.

Next, create a plan of action toward manifesting what you want, and work on at least one thing toward manifesting that desire every day.

You don't need to work on everything at once. Just pick one thing and focus on it for a bit. Visualize that want as if it is already a reality. Surround the vision with positive energy. In creating your list of wants, you have "announced" your desires to the universe, and in doing so you have opened the door to magick.

In your mind, always leave open the possibility that your wants can manifest on their own and in completely surprising ways. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that magick cannot manifest on it's own or that Spirit cannot work without you. Your wants will not always manifest in the way you expect, or according to your plan. Sometimes what you may have in mind isn't necessarily the best thing that can happen, so leave room for the possibility of something bigger or better than what you've envisioned for yourself.

You don't always have to cast a spell for Spirit to work your will, but don't expect to receive if you are unwilling to work toward your goal!

For example, if you want to love yourself more, then do more of what you love every day! Pamper yourself at least once a day, take a bubble bath to relax, read a chapter from that book you've been wanting to read, or allow yourself time to work on something you love to do, even if it's just a few minutes a day. Look in the mirror and tell yourself that you love yourself every morning and night! This also helps to draw loving relationships, so if you are looking to fall in love with that someone "right", then love yourself first! All your relationships will improve if you do!

Perhaps you want to manage your finances and stretch your money to cover more. Examine how much money you need to meet all your financial needs so you can live comfortably. Note that figure, in monthly or yearly terms, on your list. Know that "needs" always come before wants, but occasionally splurging on yourself (loving yourself) is necessary too. Be willing to forgo treats like weekly trips to the movie theater or restaurant, if that becomes necessary. These treats may be one of the things you feel makes your week more fun and comfortable, though, so have calculated that amount into the figure.

Keep accurate records of your accounts, what you have, what you pay, and what you owe. Actually being aware of what you owe, again, opens the door for manifestation to meet that need!

If you want a better paying job, be specific in the area you wish to work in as well as the people you'll work with. If you don't have a field preference you may want to at least specify that the work be fulfilling, nurturing to your soul or something that you love.

Maybe something like: *An exciting job in which I travel, meet interesting people, like and work well with my coworkers, expenses met by the company and receive a salary of at least $2500.00 monthly.* This is quite specific to the needs that you want fulfilled, and it may take more time and effort to manifest than just listing *a better paying job!* But it defines to a degree what you are looking for and it leaves open the possibility that it may manifest in several positive ways. For instance, say you are offered something that would be exciting and lets you travel, and also pays about $3200.00 a month, but you are responsible for paying the expenses you incur, which they estimate to fluctuate between 400 – 600 dollars a month. You are offered more money than you specified in compensation for having to pay

your own expenses. As another example, say you are offered a job where you will work with people you like and will make the required amount you need, but in an office setting instead of traveling; yet your prospective employer offers the opportunity for future advancement into a travel position, after you have been with the company for a specific amount of time. What you want will manifest, just not all at once. Finally, lets say you list your dream job and amount of money you want to make, but don't bother making up a resume or filling out job applications because you are to busy sitting in front of the Playstation. You make the possibility of your dream job manifesting extremely remote! Your dream job is still a possibility, of course, but a much more remote possibility than if you willingly gave the energy needed for such a thing to manifest. Not to mention that an employer is more likely to give the job to a candidate that gets off their butt and actively seeks the job rather than a person they are completely unaware of.

I'll give you a real life example now. My list is rather short and to the point, usually one or two words. A little while back I began noticing that I always woke up with a stiff neck and sore back and I decided that my mattress sucked! So I added "New Bed" to my list. I have learned to specify "new" if I really want new, because I've had things manifest as used or second hand when I hadn't been that specific - especially regarding clothes. (Once I wanted a new dress for a special occasion coming up, the next thing I knew I had all kinds of people trying to hand off bags and bags of their old clothes to me. Many of which contained a several dresses, but not nearly what I'd had in mind.) Anyway, money being in short supply at the time, the new bed idea went on the list, but my plan was to buy it after I took care of several other things first, so I did not expect it to come soon. I did make some inquiries with family about what types of mattresses they liked best, as a few had recently bought new beds, and I wondered how much I might expect to pay. This way I would get an idea of how much to start saving, not to mention add to the "financial management figure". About a week and a half after "new bed" went onto my list and the inquiries I had made, a family member called to tell me her neighbor had a brand new mattress they weren't using, just sitting (still wrapped in plastic) in their garage taking up space. They were trying to make room in their garage and just wanted to get rid of it, did I want it? That meant I could get my "new bed" several months earlier than I had anticipated or planned for! I wouldn't have to wake up with a sore back anymore! It was brand NEW and FREE the answer was definitely Yes! Even though I didn't have an entire new frame, my specific problem was resolved, and in a completely surprising way that I had not thought of! I crossed off "new bed" from my list much sooner than I ever expected.

Try not to be so rigid in your plan of action that it can't change. Allow flexibility and don't be hard on yourself if everything doesn't quite go "according to plan". Not allowing for flexibility can create stressful situations in your life and feelings of inadequacy. The object of this exercise is not to create stress, but to allow for some direction and awareness to what you really want. Don't become discouraged or let yourself feel like you've failed just because your goals haven't yet manifested, and keep in mind that the process is as important as the goal and all your needs will be met in the proper time!

Blessed Be!

Emerald

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Reviews

By John M. Morris Ph.D.

DAVID F. VENNELLS *REIKI FOR BEGINNERS: MASTERING NATURAL HEALING TECHNIQUES*. ST. PAUL (MN): LLEWELLYN PUBLICATIONS, 2002. 224 PP., $12.95.

Reiki is, of course, a healing system, developed in Japan, for dealing with physical and mental illnesses through the use of spiritual energy. The Reiki healer places his or her hands on or above each of the person's chakras, or energy centers. Invisible spirits, the Reiki guides, transfer healing energy into the places where it is needed. The basic approach is very simple but is also quite effective in its use of natural forces that reinforce any conventional medical treat-

ments that the person is receiving.

During the last century, the medical establishment, with its assortment of drugs and surgical techniques, claimed a monopoly on the treatment of physical and mental illnesses. Unfortunately, as lifetimes increased, the variety of diseases also increased, bringing an array of conditions, ranging from AIDS to cancer, for which there are no real cures. Quality of life seems actually to have diminished, as new problems arose. In the meantime, the cost of elaborate new surgical techniques and more expensive drugs has risen to the point that medical costs are beyond the means of many of us. This may account for the recent popularity of Reiki, as an alternative healing system. At first, Reiki training and treatment was far too expensive for most of us, but the cost has come down as the number of trained Reiki healers has increased.

In this recent book, David F. Vennells gives an introduction to Reiki at the first level, which is primarily concerned with self-healing. At the second level, which is only mentioned here, the student learns some of the secret Reiki symbols, which are used to invoke the healing spirits. At the third level, two more symbols are introduced, and the student gains the power to send distant healing. Since these symbols are secret, Vennells does not include them here.

I had the chance to watch two Reiki healers recently. In both cases their clients found the sessions, which took from a few minutes to about half an hour, to be effective in reducing tension and helping to heal whatever difficulties they were facing. Neither of these healers used the Reiki symbols, complex signs resembling traditional Japanese characters. In addition, neither healer called on the Reiki guides, spiritual entities that carry out the actual healing. I have the feeling that this simplified form of Reiki healing is more popular than the more esoteric forms taught in traditional Reiki.

Vennells' book is a simple and straightforward introduction to his Buddhist-oriented Reiki system, but any serious student would want to go much more deeply into the mystique that surrounds this approach. In any case, it is essential to receive instruction from a Reiki master, who can demonstrate the actual techniques required to perform Reiki healing.

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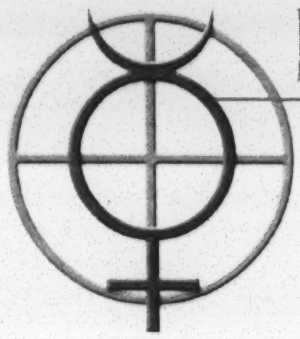

In the News

with Dave Burwasser

We have some good news about Pagans in a public school for a change. A small student Pagan group met without incident at Madison Central High School in Madison County, Kentucky, according to a copyrighted Herald-Leader story by Peter Mathews. The six students met at 7:30 am without knowledge of Principal Hubert Broaddus, the group's faculty facilitator, or any of their fellow students, because they had not publicized it. When the school administration found out about the meeting, an assistant principal was sent to sit in on it. The group eventually intends to invite non-Pagan students on an educational basis, according to organizer Wayne Boykin. The school is being compliant with the Equal Access Act of 1984, which prohibits discrimination among student-led extracurricular groups in public schools.

A group of 15 students at Cornell University held an initial meeting of a new Pagan group, according to a CORNELL SUN story by Jessica Liebman. There was an earlier Pagan group on campus four years before, but it lapsed when its members graduated with no-one to pass the torch to. The new group, according to its website, will serve the Pagan community of the university and surrounding Ithaca and Thompkins Counties in New York. One initial goal may be to get a reference about Paganism included in the religion pages of the campus life packet distributed to incoming freshmen. Another early goal is to develop a fun, but non-cheesy, acronym for the club name.

The Pagan Veterans Headstone Campaign is lobbying the US Department of Veterans Affairs to allow appropriate symbols to be set on headstones of deceased Pagan veterans. Headstone symbols presently include various Christian crosses and diverse symbols of Judaism, Buddhism, Unitarian Universalism, Mormonism, Baha'i', Islam, Hinduism, Eckankar, Humanism and Christian Science. There is no provision for a Pentacle, Hammer or Triple Moon. Contact info: <www.PaganVeterans.org>.

A commission of the Organization of American States, the Western Hemisphere diplomatic umbrella group, has found the United States to be in violation of its treaty obligations to a Native American tribe, according to an Indian Coun-

try Today story by Brenda Norrell. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights found the federal government in violation of its 1863 treaty with the Western Shoshone people concerning their ancestral land in what is now called Nevada. That land is being seized for the national Nuclear Waste Repository at Yucca Mountain, which the Shoshone hold sacred; and for open pit cyanide leach gold mining. The decision, based on both treaty law and OAS human rights conventions, has general implications for relations between the federal government and Native peoples.

Aliester Crowley, Superstar? The Dominion Entertainment Group and The Big Picture Agency will produce "Aleister Crowley: Revolt of the Magicians," a film biography of the most controversial person in modern occultism, according to a Market Wire story. The screenplay is co-authored by Crowley scholar Lon DuQuette. Production should go forward in the US and England in late 2004.

Dateline: Scotland

There are 14,052 self-proclaimed Scottish Jedis, making it the fourth largest religion in Scotland with more adherents that the combined Jewish and Sikh communities. But you wouldn't know it if the Pagan Federation hadn't shelled out 2,000 British pounds to have the last UK census re-examined after the General Registry Office refused to break out the "other" religions and distinguish them from atheists, according to a Sunday Herald story by Jenifer Johnston. The recount also recorded 1,930 Pagans in Scotland, the number sought by the Federation (in the expectation that it would be closer to 4,000 or 5,000), which hopes that the Scottish Executive will recognize Pagan marriages. An official of the Scottish Interfaith Council was delighted to have the more accurate count of religions in Scotland.

A breach has developed between organizers of the Beltane Fire Festival and the Edinburgh Council and community leaders, according to a NEWS SCOTSMAN story by Brian Ferguson. Because of complaints of drumming into the wee pre-dawn hours of May 1st, the Council wants to impose a strict dispersal from Calton Hill when the event offically closes at 1:00 am. Organizers and supporters of the event, which has been held since 1988, disagree because it would be difficult to control -- there are generally more than 10,000 attendees -- and would prevent them from watching the dawn from the hill. The festival may have to charge attendees for the first time, to defray the costs of imposing internal controls. No one from the festival is claiming the right to disturb the neighbors, only to peacefully watch the dawn.

Pagans expect to be admitted soon to the Scottish Interfaith Council, an umbrella group of the major faiths in Scotland, according to a NEWS SCOTSMAN story by Yakub Qureshi. The Pagan Federation is hopeful that discussions it has held with members of the Council -- which include Christian, Jewish and Moslem faith organizations -- will lead to approval at the annual meeting in October. This in turn may eventually secure state recognition of Pagan wedding and funeral services, and holiday leave for major Pagan holy days.

Dateline: England

Julien Foster, a Tory with ambitions to be elected to Parliament, has blasted the Waltham Forest Council for adding a link to the Pagan Federation to the other links on its "Beliefs and Faiths" web page. Foster called the move a waste of taxpayers' money, and implied that the Federation web site was primarily a sales organ, according to a Waltham Forest Guardian story by Tom Hutchison.

The Pagan Federation is offering a reward of 1,000 pounds for the arrest of vandals who painted the famous Rollright Stones on the border of Oxfordshire and Warwickshire, according to a BBC story by Malcolm Prior. Cleanup costs for the Neolithic stone circle may be between 30,000 and 100,000 pounds, which could require a rise in admission charged. The site dates back perhaps to 2500 BCE and has been used by British Pagans for weddings and baby-naming ceremonies in the modern age.

Dateline: Australia

PaganPages, a monthly neoPagan discussion group in Sydney, Australia, has moved to new quarters after a tiff with the pub owner at their former venue, according to the SYDNEY MORNING HERALD.

The manager of Greenwood Hotel said other patrons were offput, and that the Pagans had cast spells to clear bars in the Hotel and had turned down his request that they rent a private room. The group has found a friendlier welcome at Oaks Hotel. Their discussion topics have shifted from spells and potions to discrimination and intolerance.

Melbourne boasts 4,155 Witches, making it the Witch capital of Australia, according to the 2001 census, reports a story in THE AGE. Another 1,459 Witches live elsewhere in the state of Victoria. The number of people identifying themselves as Witches or Wiccan rose from 1,849 in the 1996 census to 8,755 in 2001. Under the umbrella term Pagan -- covering Witches, Druids, Heathens and Shamans -- the total count rose from 10,000 in 1996 to 20,000 in 2001. Being in the Southern Hemisphere, most Aussie Wiccans cast their circles widdershins, to match the Down Under daily motion of the Sun; and swap the observances of Beltaine and Samhain to correspond to the Southern seasons.

Dateline: Iran

A divided conservative municipal government agreed to permit observance of a fire festival in Tehran to welcome

Spring. The conservatives took over the city after a reformist government collapsed in in-fighting. Hardliners still condemn the "chaharshanbeh suri" observance as "pagan". It is a holdover from the Zoroastrian religion that flourished in pre-Islamic Persia. Moderate conservatives agreed to permit the festival, limiting it to 40 square blocks and putting out extra firefighters.

The rulers of Iran are confronted -- thanks to clerical encouragement of big families 30 years ago -- with a huge youthful majority that never experienced the Shah and does not remember Ayatollah Khomeini very well. These youngsters are looking for whatever opportunities for entertainment and social contact they can find in strictly controlled Iran, for whose official dourness they see no rationale. If the festival does not get official sanction it will be held anyway in an outlaw mode, which would be an even bigger headache for the authorities. The conservatives may also want to divert the under-30 crowd away from politics, given the public way the hardliner leadership stole the Iranian national election earlier this year.

The festival is indeed "pagan" in that it occurs at the same time every year. The Islamic calendar is lunar and thus slips around the year of the seasons each century; unlike, eg, Christmas and Easter, Islamic holy days (and months) are not tied to any particular time of year.

The festival was held, but not without incident: One teenager was killed by a homemade explosive and 100 other people injured, four seriously. The modern form of this ceremony is marked by rivalry among the youngsters to produce bigger and louder fireworks.

The sanctioning of a portion of the city for annual blowing off of steam holds a wry echo for Americans. This was exactly the solution devised by the early 19th Century city fathers of New Orleans to contain the non-Christian celebrations brought in by slaves bought from the Caribbean Islands (which the French banned when they owned the place before the Louisiana Purchase). "Congo Square" was the root of American jazz, blues, rock'n'roll and its spinoffs; the pomp and funk of New Orleans funerals; and the panoply of mummers, Lords of Misrule, and the rest of what makes New Orleans Mardi Gras unique among "Christian" celebrations. Perhaps history will yet bite the Ayatollahs.

Dateline: Salem

The iconic Brit witchcraft student will meet the iconic Yank witchcraft town when "The Witching Hour: A Harry Potter Symposium," is held in Salem, Massachusetts in early October 2005, according to a Boston Globe story by Kathy McCabe. The same sponsors drew 600 potter fans to Disney World for "Nimbus 2003" last year. The event is (mostly) literary in nature and the sponsors are not related to Potter author JK Rowling or Potter moviemaker Warner Brothers. The activities will feature a game of Earthbound Quiddich. The symposium could transfuse up to $1.6 million into the regional economy.

Salem is the sole US city to which any of the five Potter books make reference: An American delegation from the "Salem Witches Institute" in attendance at the World Quiddich Cup.

Snag that Snitch!

-=oOo=-

Susun Weed

June 4, 5 & 6, 2004

Seven Generations Community Center

Is proud to host this renowned Herbalist and bestselling author of:

New Menopausal Years the Wise Woman Way,
Breast Cancer? Breast Health!,
***Healing Wise* and**
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Space is limited. so register early!

Susun S. Weed has been living the simple life for more than 30 years as an herbalist, goatkeeper, homesteader, and feminist. In addition to being the author of four highly-acclaimed books on herbs and women's health, Susun lectures world-wide as the voice of the Wise Woman tradition, personally supervises 300 correspondence students, is editor-in-chief of Ash Tree Publishing, and directs the activities of the Wise Woman Center, where she trains apprentices (222 to date) in the shamanic arts, and plays with the fairies.

Pre-registration is required. Contact Ivy at paulasteele@comcast.net or (734) 904-1168 or Ange at ange429@yahoo.com or (313) 575-7687

Please visit Susun Weed's website at **www.susunweed.com**

and Seven Gen's website at **www.sacredpath.org/7gencc**

Bulletin Board

While we believe listings on our bulletin board to be correct at the time of publication, you would do well to check with the sponsors before traveling any great distance to listed events.

To list your event free (100 words or less), contact *The Seeker Journal* (seeker@seekerjournal.org). Please specify: type of event, date and time, location, and contact information. **Contact information must be provided.**

Classes

Class	Day/Time	Description	Location	Contact
Earth Centered Traditions	Second and Fourth Mondays	Eclectic Pagan and Earth-centered spirituality group offering group study, workshops, activities, and open ritual. UU Church, off Abbott Road behind the Public Library.	*East Lansing, Michigan*	Delta@acd.net, or (517) 339-2796
Circle of the Twelve Oaks	3rd Wed. 7-9 p.m.	Location varies, as do subjects. Circle of the Twelve Oaks.	*West of Detroit, MI*	brown_wren@hotmail.com
Witchcraft 101 & 102	Contact sponsor	Weekly Meetings at Isle of Avalon, 412 E. Fourth Street	*Royal Oak, Michigan*	(248) 336-8228
Federation of Circles and Solitaries	Contact sponsor	The Downriver group, The Federation of Circles and Solitaries, holds seasonal rituals and weekly classes. "This is a very relaxed fellowship circle and a whole lot of fun." No alcohol, drugs, or weapons allowed at Federation events. Circles are held rain or shine. Classes must be paid for in advance, and openings are limited.	*South of Detroit, MI*	Greg @ (800) 312-3522 or see our web site www.FOCASMI.org

Weekly Events

Event	Day/Time	Description	Location	Contact
Earth Centered Traditions	Second and Fourth Mondays, 7 p.m.	Eclectic Pagan and Earth-centered spirituality group offering group study, workshops, activities, and open ritual. Unitarian Universalist Church, 855 Grove St. (off Abbott Road), behind the Public Library	*East Lansing, MI*	Delta@acd.net or (517) 339-2796.
Pagan Coffee Night	Tuesdays, 7 p.m.	Informal weekly discussion/networking/social/ support meetings. PO Box 614, Houghton MI 49913.	*Houghton, MI*	Hearth@mailcity.com http://pages.whowhere.com/community/hearth
Wiccan Journey	Wednesdays 7:30 p.m	A discussion group centered around exploring Wiccan ideas and beliefs. MSU Union	*East Lansing, Michigan*	Jason Mankey, solivictus@yahoo.com
Shamanic Journeys	Wednesdays 7:30 p.m.	Weekly trance-journeys to distant realms of the spirit for healing, divination, personal transformation. Inter-Cooperative Council Education Center, 1522 Hill St. (behind 1520). Please park on nearby side streets.	*Ann Arbor, MI*	(734) 665-3522 or e-mail jmm@cyberspace.org
Green Spiral	Every other Wednesday.	Green Spiral is a discussion and networking group for Pagan students at Michigan State and folks in the surrounding Lansing area. We welcome people of all ages and stages of learning. Meetings are every other Wednesday, year-round. Visit our web site or drop us an email for more information!	*East Lansing, Michigan*	Pagan@pilot.msu.edu http://www.msu.edu/~pagan/
Pagan Chat Nights	Thursdays 7:30 p.m.	Federation of Circles and Solitaries. An hour of mix and mingle, followed by an hour of discussion on a new topic each week Somethin's Brewin', 15371 Dix-Toledo Road	*Southgate, Michigan*	Greg @ (800) 312-3522 or www.FOCASMI.org
Open Grove Society	Every Other Thursday, 8 p.m.	We are a pagan organization on the campus of Central Michigan University. We hold at least one workshop per month on various topics. *Central Michigan University,* Amspach Hall, Rm. 157.	*Mt. Pleasant, Michigan*	Panthera333@moonshinehollow.com

Event	Day/Time	Description	Location	Contact
Crystal Treasures Workshops	Fridays, 7 p.m	Discuss the topics you want to discuss with like-minded individuals. 104 W. Walton Blvd.	*Pontiac, Michigan.,*	Crystreasur@aol.com (148) 335-1405.
Monthly Gathering	Sundays 2-4 p.m.	E-Groups meet for discussion. Denny's, 715 44th St. SW at US-131, Wyoming MI 49509. Sanctuary of the Silver Moon.	*Grand Rapids*	Grsotsm@yahoogroups.com
Wiccan Church of Canada	Sundays 8 P.M.	Public rituals at 100 Vaughan Road. Classes every Tuesday at 8 p.m. Newsletter available at Sabbats.	*Toronto, Ontario*	(416) 656-6564.

Monthly Events

Event	Day/Time	Description	Location	Contact
Coffee Hour	May 2 6-9 p.m.	Pagan social hour. First Sunday of every month. Java Hutt Café, 165 West Nine Mile Road. Magical Education Council	*Ferndale, Michigan.*	JMo4970872@cs.com
Magickal Hair Beading	Sun. May 2 8-11 p.m.	Learn hair beading with magickal intent under the full moon. Women only. $3 donation. Seven Generations, 1910 Hill St. (basement). Please call to pre-register.	*Ann Arbor, MI*	diaroque928@yahoo.com (734) 904-4862
The Pagan Roundtable	May 4 7:00 p.m.	Discussions and Networking for Witches, Druids, Magicians, and other assorted Pagans. First Tuesday of every month. Mt. Clemens Public Library, 150 Cass Avenue, Downstairs in the Community Room.	*Mt. Clemens, Michigan*	Arwen at StarEnd@aol.com. Please put Pagan Roundtable in your subject line.
Full Moon Gatherings	May 4 6:30 - 9 p.m.	Our group intention is to practice our learnings and share our teachings with others to enhance our community. Participate in rituals from a variety of traditions. .	*Ann Arbor, Michigan*	Valerie at Designwitch@earthlink.net
Full Moon Ritual	May 4	Ritual begins promptly at 7 p.m. Our circles are small and limited to 12 participants. Those interested should contact the HPS.	*Ann Arbor, Michigan*	Http://home.earthlink.net/~nal
Women's Full Moon Ritual	May 4 7:00-10:00 p.m.	Attune with the moon and make some magick with the women of 7 Gen. This month's ritual honors The Morrigan. Seven Generations, 1910 Hill St. (basement) www.sacredpath.org/7gencc Bring friends! $2 donation.	*Ann Arbor, MI*	paulasteele@comcast.net or (734) 904-1168
Full Moon Drum Circle	Tues. May 4 All day	Community work day, meeting, and circle. 1910 Hill St. (basement) Work day, 10 a.m., Meeting 6 p.m. Drum Circle at 8 p.m. Drumming, dancing and fun	*Ann Arbor, MI*	paulasteele@comcast.net (734) 904-1168

Moon Mist Rising Full Moon Celebration	May 4 6:30 pm	Celebrate full moons with Moon Mist Rising at Bentmore Farm, 3655 West 32 Mile Road. Access via Rochester Road to 32 Mile, then east to Dequindre, south to Predmore, east to Farm or via Van Dyke, going west past Mound one mile. Call to confirm; bring folding chairs, bug spray, cover-ups, and a finger food snack to share.	*Predmore, MI*	Caridwyn 586 781-6403 Brian 586 752-2022
Witches Meetup Day	May 5 8 p.m	A series of monthly informal gatherings in local restaurants, part of an international effort to bring Witches together.	*Various locations*	http://witches.meetup.com
Meet and Greet	May 7 8-9 p.m.	Meets on the first Friday of every month at Borders Book Shop, off Novi Road, just south of I-96. We have a general social gathering for all interested. Free. Circle of the Twelve Oaks.	*Novi, Michigan*	brown_wren@hotmail.com
Kabbalah Centre	Sun. May 9 and 23 1-3 p.m.	Discuss teachings of the Kabbalah Centre International, based on the weeklyt Zohar section. Seven Generations, 1910 Hill St. (basement). Small donation.	*Ann Arbor, MI*	Michaael Wilkin mcdike@med.umich.edu
New Moon Movie Night	Wed. May 19 8-11 p.m.	Enjoy a featured movie on a big 8' screen. Popcorn and pop, or bring your own non alcoholic beverage. Seven Generations. Non-members $3. 1910 Hill St. (basement)..	*Ann Arbor, MI*	paulasteele@comcast.net or (734) 904-1168
Druidic Coffee Hour	May 21 7 - 9 p.m.	A time to get together with friends and discuss topics of interest to us all. All welcome. Borders Books, 3527 Washtenaw.	*Ann Arbor, Michigan*	www.msen.com/~robh/slg/

Special Events

Event	Day/Time	Description	Location	Contact
May Day Dancing	Sat., May 1 Dawn	Morris Dancers at the U-M join in singing and dancing: "We like to rise when the Sun she rises." Nichols Arboretum, on the path below the Geddes Road entrance, just east of U-M main campus.	*Ann Arbor, MI*	*734-665-7291*
Beltaine Ritual	Sat., May 1 7 p.m.	Eclectic May Day gathering to welcome the spring and bring fertility to the earth. All welcome to join in singing, dancing, and general rejoicing. Crazy Wisdom Bookstore and Tea Room, 114 S. Main St.	*Ann Arbor, MI*	*734-665-2757*
Beltaine Ritual	Sat. May 1 2-5 p.m.	Come join us as we honor Aren, our god of beauty, love, and freedom. There will be a raffle and potluck following the ritual All welcome. Druids of Shining Lakes Grove. Botsford Recreational Preserve, 3015 Miller Road (just west of the freeway).	*Ann Arbor, MI*	www.msen.com/~robh/slg
Beltaine Gathering	Thurs., May 6 3-10 p.m.	Many talks, demonstrations, and magical workings, including tarot readings, reiki demonstrations, astrological readings, jewelry making, and many other fun things. Refreshments available. Isle of Avalon Books and Gifts, 738 S. Washington at Lincoln.	*Royal Oak, MI*	248-336-8228 Ladyofthe|sle4@yahoo.com
Wellspring	May 27-31	Celebrating 20th anniversary of ADF, continental Druid organization, with ritual, workshops, and the ADF annual meeting. Brushwood Folklore Center.	*Sherman, NY*	robh@cyberspace.org or (734) 262-1052
Memorial Day Weekend	May 28-31, 2004	Aeon 3 Sacred Earth Retreat, celebrating the sanctity of the Web of Life and the power of Cooperative Community, at a 175 acre secluded nature sanctuary hidden in the green hills of Southern Indiana. Many workshops and	*Odonata, PO Box 2055, Bedford,*	aeonarc@yahoo.com www.magickmonkey.com

Event	Day/Time	Description	Location	Contact
		ritual events.	47421	
Midwest Witchcamp 2004	June 12-19	Dreamweaving sponsors this week of instruction and ritual at Diana's Grove, in Central Missouri. Mary Magdalene will provide inspiration. Themes include Elements, Oracle/Aspecting/Divination, Sacred Sexuality. $585 includes tent space and meals.	Salem, MO	Dreamweaving, 3800 Rio Grande Blvd. NW Suite 124, Albuquerque NM 87107
Pagan Spirit Gathering	June 20-27	Week-long program of workshops, rituals, drumming, and much else, at Wisteria Campground. Circle Sanctuary, PO Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572. Www.circlesanctuary.org/events	Southern Ohio	(608) 924-2216
Spirits of the Earth Festival	July 6-11	Bands, authors, 100+ workshops, daily rituals in many traditions, drumming circles, and much else.	Near London, Ontario	www.spiritsfest.com
Parliament of the World's Religions	July 7-13	Major gathering of world religious leaders for an extensive exchange of views. Once held every century, the Parliament now meets every six years, and has become the largest and most comprehensive of the international interfaith conferences.	Barcelona, Spain	www.cpwr.org
Pan Pagan Festival	August 4-8	Rituals, Workshops, Candle-light Labyrinth, Pagan Follies, and much else. Midwest Pagan Council.	North-Central Indiana	www.midwestpagancouncil.org